



STATE OF IDAHO



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Symptoms of Neurological form of Equine Herpes Virus Observed in Several Idaho Horses

BOISE, ID – The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) is investigating a suspected outbreak of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1) within the state. Horses may have been exposed to the severe neurological form of EHV-1 at the NCHA Western National Championships in Ogden, Utah held April 30-May 8, 2011. Confirmed and suspected cases of the disease have also been reported in Utah, Colorado and several other states.

Two Idaho horses which traveled to the event have died and several others are currently under the care of veterinarians. State Veterinarian, Dr. Bill Barton is recommending horse owners incorporate strict movement controls or containment methods to prevent the spread of the disease. "If you participated in this event, or have contact with horses that traveled to this event, you should notify your veterinarian and isolate and monitor these horses for a minimum of 21 days for clinical signs of the disease," warned Dr. Barton.

Equine Herpes Virus is highly contagious among horses. Llamas and alpacas can also be affected but the virus poses no health threat to humans. Symptoms may include a fever, nasal discharge, incoordination, hind-end weakness, lethargy, urine dribbling and diminished tail tone. The virus is easily spread by airborne transmission, horse-to-horse contact and by contact with nasal secretions on equipment, tack, feed and other surfaces. People can spread the virus to horses by means of contaminated hands, clothing, shoes and vehicles. Currently there is no equine vaccine for protection against the neurological strain of the virus.

"I encourage owners to frequently monitor their horses and contact their veterinarian immediately should any symptoms of illness be detected," said Dr. Barton. EHV-1 is also a Notifiable Disease to the State Veterinarian in Idaho. Anyone suspecting or confirming a case of EHV-1 should call (208) 332-8540 or (208) 332-8570 to report cases.

Additional Resources:

- [A Guide To Understanding the Neurologic Form of EHV Infection](#)
- [USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Resources](#)
- [American Assoc. of Equine Practitioners Fact Sheet](#)

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